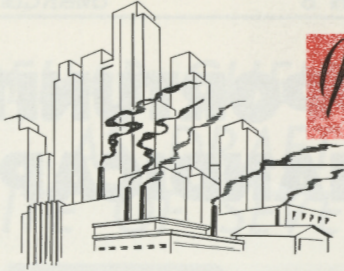


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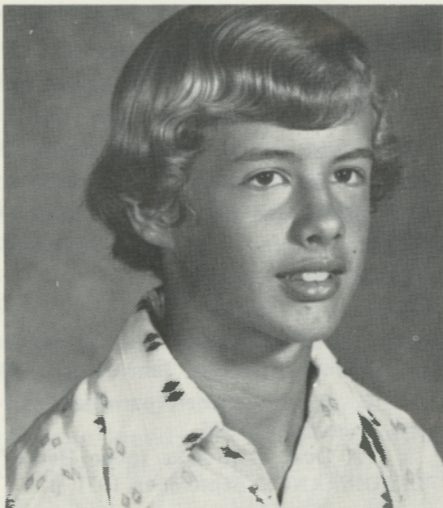
MARCH - APRIL, 1975

Florence Student Wins 1975 Essay Contest

Randy Cain of Florence won first place honors in the 1975 South Carolina "Ability Counts" essay contest. The contest, which is sponsored annually by the South Carolina Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, is open to high school juniors and seniors.

As statewide winner, Cain receives a four-year scholarship to the state-supported institution of his choice, as well as an all expense paid trip to Washington, D. C., to attend the annual meeting of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. Governor James B. Edwards presented him with a certificate signed for the President of the United States and a check for \$50.

(Continued on page 4)



RANDY CAIN



Dill D. Beckman (right), Commissioner of the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department, and Dr. Andrew S. Adams (center), Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration (HEW), met with Governor James B. Edwards.

RSA Commissioner Visits South Carolina

Dr. Andrew S. Adams, Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration, HEW, Washington, D. C., visited South Carolina to get insight into its rehabilitation program.

He met with Dill D. Beckman, Commissioner of the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department, who is active on the national level with programs for the disabled.

While in South Carolina, Dr. Adams met with Governor James B. Edwards on rehabilitation both on the national and state levels and how it relates to the citizens of South Carolina.

Dr. Adams recognized the fact that the rehabilitation program in South Carolina is first in the nation.

He was speaker for the kick-off luncheon for the 1975 Easter Seal drive.

FULL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY: DOES IT EXIST FOR THE HANDICAPPED?

By Randy Cain

"Every person is different and it's very hard to generalize,"¹ as one person who works closely with the handicapped said. There are many different types of handicaps and each one imposes different limitations. Therefore, any statement about employment opportunities for the handicapped is at best a very broad generalization. Let's refrain from making all-inclusive statements for right now, and look at some of the problems that confront the handicapped in seeking employment.

The first step toward employment in many cases would be to overcome any emotional problem that may be connected with the physical handicap. Lack of self-confidence can be more crippling than any physical handicap. A handicapped person needs to feel accepted and to learn to function in spite of his limitations.

For many, there is the need for proper motivation. It is difficult for a person to realize the importance of making his own way in life if his income from government checks has been larger than the income he would receive if he were employed. C. Cooper Tedder, Mayor of Florence, South Carolina, believes that in such a case, "Lack of opportunity would be minimized with proper motivation."²

There are few cases in which lack of higher education or training toward employment would be a problem. In Florence, both Francis Marion College and Florence-Darlington Technical Education Center are easily accessible to the handicapped. Through the rehabilitation office, many can be paid sub-contract wages while receiving on-the-

job training. Also, the Pee Dee Rehabilitation Facility provides training and helps the handicapped overcome their limitations while learning how to function on a job.

For most handicapped people with less limiting physical problems, full employment opportunity does exist. All of the employers that I interviewed have handicapped employees. I found and public officials confirmed, that employers are very open towards hiring the handicapped who are not extremely disabled.

On the other hand, there are the more seriously disabled who have an especially difficult time finding employment or being able to work at all. This is partly due to some wrong attitudes and mistaken ideas on the part of employers, and to the problem of finding a job suited to the particular person's abilities.

Negative attitudes toward hiring the handicapped are often due to the ignorance of the employer. One of the main reasons that employers are reluctant to hire the handicapped is their fear of higher insurance rates. Many are not aware of the Second Injury Clause and the fact that the handicapped have better safety records than other employees. It is especially hard for epileptics, people limited with back problems, and the deaf to find jobs in industry because of the employer's fear of injury on the job.

Many employers just don't realize the abilities of the handicapped and don't give them a chance. They don't realize that the handicapped who have been through a vocational rehabilitation program have already proved them-

selves to be dependable and capable workers.

Another mistake that some employers make is just not wanting handicapped people around. Some wouldn't want to go to the trouble of making small changes such as building ramps so that the handicapped could be employed. Here the question can be asked, "Is it enough to say that each (handicapped) person should . . . learn to adjust to society's injustices, or must we expect some adjustments on the part of society, too?"³

For the more severely handicapped, it's not necessarily an employer problem. For them the difficulty is finding the right job, the job in which the person would be a competent worker.

Of course, full employment opportunity does not exist for all handicapped people. It only exists where proper training and jobs are available and proper attitudes on the part of the handicapped are met with proper employer attitudes. However, the potential for greater opportunity does exist. To increase their opportunities we need to first accept the handicapped as human beings, created in the image of God. We need to recognize the problems they face because of their handicaps, and help them overcome these limitations. Also, we need to give them the same opportunities we would expect as rightful members of society.

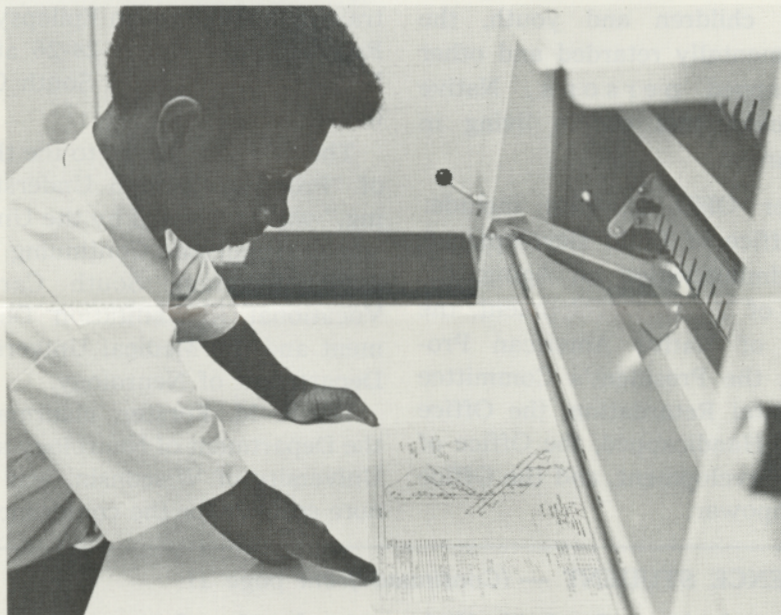
1. Mrs. Hanson, Adjustment Instructor, personal interview, January 8, 1975.

2. C. Cooper Tedder, personal interview, January 7, 1975.

3. "A Deaf Man Asks to be Heard," *PERFORMANCE*, September, 1971, p. 4.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The above is the text of the first place essay in the 1975 "Ability Counts" contest.)

REHAB CLIENT WORKS AS DRAFTSMAN IN SPITE OF SEVERE DISABILITY



George Mitchell works in a pipe information office of a construction company, handling new sketches which come in. He logs them and files them for future use.

Many of his co-workers find it interesting to watch him at work.

George was born with absence of the forearms and hands with the exception of thumbs, one of which is movable.

"I do anything I want to," George says. "Other people can't understand how I do it, though. They think I've had special training to learn to do things like writing. But I just learned how — like anybody else."

He is the youngest of 15 children born on a small farm near Gifford, South Carolina. In spite of his severe and obvious disability, George was expected to carry his share of the load of the work of the family.

He learned to care for all of his personal needs with the exception of buttoning his clothes and tying shoelaces. He attended public schools and graduated from Estill High School in 1968.

After graduation, he realized that he would probably need some assistance in obtaining gainful employment. He was referred to Vocational Rehabilitation from the Crippled Children's program.

George underwent medical and vocational evaluation to determine the extent of his problems and what could be done to overcome them.

It was at first recommended that George be fitted with artificial limbs, but Medical University doctors and a representative from a major limb company agreed that the client would do better without a prosthesis.

George was later referred to the South Carolina Opportunity School for further evaluation.

While at the Opportunity School, he took a course in Art. He even thought about going into commercial art as an occupation.

His drafting instructor was very impressed with George's attitude and ability. Evaluation showed that he was interested in this type of work, but needed some additional instruction in mathematics in order to be successful.

S. C.'S DISABILITY DETERMINATION DIVISION RANKS NO. 1 NATIONALLY

The Bureau of Disability Insurance (BDI) of the Social Security Administration ranked the South Carolina Disability Determination Division first nationally in performance during the last quarter of 1974.

The Disability Determination Division of the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department has the responsibility of making decisions on eligibility for Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income benefits.

The national and regional BDI offices rank each state engaging in disability work in a performance index for each quarter, evaluating both the quality and quantity of performance of all state agencies.

B. J. Marett is director of the Disability Determination Division in South Carolina, which operates from regional offices in Columbia, Greenville and Charleston.

After completing courses in mathematics, George was enrolled in a drafting course. He says he forgot about his art work after he started into drafting. He says "that's all I want to do now."

George began working with Daniel Construction Company when he completed his course in drafting in the summer of 1972 and has worked there since that time.

He was recently transferred from the DuPont plant near Camden, South Carolina to the Cooper River plant near Charleston.

RSA TRANSFERRED TO OFFICE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The Rehabilitation Services Administration has officially joined HEW's Office of Human Development.

RSA's program consists primarily of support of the State-Federal program of vocational rehabilitation services, and special grants and programs relating to mental retardation and other developmental disabilities.

The transfer of RSA from HEW's Social and Rehabilitation Service is the result of PL 93-516, the "Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1974," which became law on December 9.

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The Office of Human Development (OHD) was established in April of 1973 to organize HEW's planning and resources more effectively for certain groups of "vulnerable" Americans with special needs: children and youth, the aged, mentally retarded and other handicapped persons, Native Americans, and people living in rural areas.

Other OHD agencies include: The Office of Child Development, the Administration on Aging, the Office of Youth Development, the Office of Native American Programs, the President's Committee on Mental Retardation, the Office for the Handicapped, the Office of Rural Development, and the Office of Manpower.

Medical University Holds Regional Epilepsy Conference

Rehabilitation counselors from eight Southeastern states attended a training conference in Epilepsy and Rehabilitation March 24-26 at the Medical University of South Carolina.

The program, keyed to the theme of "Progress through Understanding," was sponsored by the University of Tennessee Continuing Education Program, South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department and the Medical University's Department of Neurology.

Dr. F. M. Forster, chairman of the Department of Neurology at the University of Wisconsin, was keynote speaker for the conference.

FLORENCE STUDENT — (Continued from page 1)

Cain, a junior at Southside High School in Florence, was born in Osaka, Japan, where his parents, Rev. and Mrs. Venson Cain were Presbyterian missionaries until 1967.

He is a member of the All-State Chorus, the Florence Chorale Society, and was Furman Scholar. He is President of the French Club and Treasurer of the Bible Club at Southside. He is also an Explorer Scout.

Other winners include: Debra Easterling of Bowman, second place; Matt Ward of Florence, third place; Michael Hale of Mt. Pleas-

ant, fourth place; and Debbie Batchelor of Blacksburg, fifth place. Second and third place winners receive \$35 and \$15 respectively. All top five winners receive a certificate signed for the President of the United States.

Awards for the contest are made by the J. E. Hangar Company, the W. T. Hinnant Artificial Limb Company and the South Carolina Labor Council.

Dill D. Beckman, Commissioner of the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department, is chairman of the Governor's Committee.

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